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Evangeline Sargent Testimony  
Appropriations Committee  
February 15, 2013

Good Afternoon members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Evangeline Sargent and am a resident of Oakdale. I'm testifying about the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) budget.

As a former client of DMHAS I know that it provides a much needed service and needs every penny it gets. One of it's funded services is the Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP). They provide a valuable service to the residents of this state. They protect the legal rights of those with psychiatric disabilities. The the budget before you will cut about half of their budget which is unacceptable. They have cut services and the staff has sacrificed things themselves. A large portion of their cases are regarding housing. With the budget cut they are facing they are going to have to cut services even more. How is a person with a disability supposed to get help with legal matters when no one is there to help them? CLRP is there to help us out. Without them and their wealth of information who will help us out? I understand that there is a budget crisis. Is sacrificing those that need help already the way to solve this crisis? It's already hard enough for us to get help. Please don't take our lifelines away. Thank you.